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AG ECONOMIC SURVEY WILL MEASURE FARM FINANCIAL HEALTH

Tennessee agricultural producers will have the opportunity to “let the facts be known” by participating in the 2004 Agricultural Resource Management Survey conducted by USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). This study, beginning in mid-February, provides vital statistics about the financial well-being of America’s agricultural producers. Most importantly, these statistics are used by members of the agricultural community and their legislators when making important decisions that impact the future of America’s farmers and ranchers.

Data collected will present the only objective, true picture of the financial well-being of Tennessee farm operators and will provide an accurate portrayal as Congress assesses the impact of the Farm Bill. These data are also a resource when policymakers determine Federal assistance. During 2003, USDA’s Farm Services Agency (FSA) distributed to producers \$15.9 billion in farm program payments including \$2.2 billion in conservation funding, and \$3.1 billion in emergency assistance payments.

Each Tennessee producer chosen to participate in this survey will represent approximately 365 fellow producers, and will therefore make an important contribution to the overall welfare of America’s farmers and ranchers. All individual data collected are held strictly confidential by law (Title 7, U.S. Code). Only statistical totals are published for selected geographic regions and the nation.

Results from this survey will be used by farm and ranch operators, farm organizations, commodity groups, lenders, university researchers, news media, local USDA agencies, farm suppliers, and others to compute prices paid, evaluate economic challenges facing America’s food and fiber producers, determine the need for farm assistance, measure the cost of agricultural production, and assess the ability for producers to maintain sustainable farms.

Survey results will be released in *Farm Production Expenditures* on July 15, 2005. For a copy of the finished report or to obtain other agricultural statistics, visit the Tennessee Agricultural Statistics Service website at www.nass.usda.gov/tn or call 1-800-626-0987.

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